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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, US, TU
SUBJECT: CODEL LANTOS. MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER OZAL

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1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SUMMARY: IN A JANUARY 16 MEETING LASTING ALMOST TWO HOURS, CODEL LANTOS HELD AN IN-DEPTH DISCUSSION WITH PRIME MINISTER TURGUT OZAL ON A VARIETY OF TOPICS, INCLUDING TURKEY'S NEW ECONOMIC POLICIES, INTERNAL POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN TURKEY, CYPRUS, AND TURKISH MILITARY AND SECURITY CONCERNS, INCLUDING ITS POLICIES VIS-A-VIS SYRIA. END SUMMARY.

3. INTRODUCTION: IN A MEETING ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR FORTY MINUTES, BUT WHICH EXPANDED INTO NEARLY TWO HOURS, CODEL LANTOS MET WITH NEW TURKISH PM OZAL ON JANUARY 16. OZAL WAS ACCOMPANIED AT THE MEETING BY MINISTER OF STATE (AND ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER) MESUT YILMAZ, TOGETHER WITH OZAL ADVISORS ADNAN KAHVECI AND NABI SENSOY. IN HIS INTRODUCTORY REMARKS, CONGRESSMAN LANTOS EXPRESSED THE INTEREST OF THE CODEL IN DISCUSSING AT LENGTH A NUMBER OF CURRENT TOPICS, INCLUDING OZAL'S ECONOMIC POLICIES, DOMESTIC POLITICS, CYPRUS AND MILITARY-SECURITY POLICY. ON ECONOMIC MATTERS, LANTOS NOTED THAT OZAL'S NEW INITIATIVES MAY REPRESENT THE COUNTRY'S LAST CHANCE FOR A "FREE ENTERPRISE, MASS-BASED" APPROACH TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. HE EXPRESSED THE CODEL'S HOPE THAT THIS EXPERIMENT WILL SUCCEED, AND ASKED HOW THE U.S. CONGRESS MIGHT HELP TO ACCELERATE PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND JOINT VENTURES BY U.S. FIRMS IN TURKEY. THE CONGRESSMAN ALSO COMMENTED THAT THE RECENT TURKISH ELECTIONS ARE SEEN AS A SIGN THAT TURKEY IS SERIOUS ABOUT DEMOCRACY, THOUGH IT WILL HAVE TO TRAVEL THAT ROAD AT ITS OWN SPEED. HE EXPRESSED THE INTEREST OF THE U.S. CONGRESS IN SEEING GREATER OBSERVANCE OF PRESS FREEDOM, HUMAN RIGHTS, RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND THE "WHOLE SPECTRUM OF VALUES WHICH YOU AND WE SHARE." REFERRING TO THE CODEL'S EARLIER DISCUSSION WITH THE CHIEF OF THE TURKISH GENERAL STAFF, LANTOS

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MENTIONED THE JOINT INTEREST WHICH THE U.S. AND TURKEY SHARE REGARDING SYRIA'S ROLE AS A SOVIET SURROGATE, AND A SOURCE OF SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM. CONGRESSMAN WINN ADDED THAT THE CODEL ALSO WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THE PM'S VIEWS ON THE FORTHCOMING MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, AND ON THE REPEAL OF MARTIAL LAW.

4. ECONOMIC POLICY: OZAL BEGAN WITH AN OUTLINE OF TURKISH ECONOMIC POLICY FROM THE EARLY YEARS OF THIS CENTURY THROUGH 1983. IN PASSING, HE NOTED THAT THE ANARCHY AND TERRORISM OF THE 1970S WHICH DID SO MUCH DAMAGE TO THE ECONOMY WERE STIMULATED, IN PART, BY A GENEROUS POLITICAL AMNESTY IN 1974, "ONE REASON WHY WE ARE VERY CAREFUL ABOUT THE AMNESTY QUESTION AT PRESENT." ON RECENT ECONOMIC REFORM MEASURES IN TURKEY, OZAL STATED THAT THE EXTREME LEFT, INFLUENCED BY THE COMMUNIST NATIONS, WERE VERY FRUSTRATED WITH THE SUCCESSES OF THE ECONOMIC PROGRAM WHICH HE HAD INTRODUCED IN 1980. THESE FORCES, IN TURN, HAD MADE HIS GOVERNMENT THEIR "TARGET."

5. DOMESTIC POLITICS: OZAL WENT ON TO STATE THAT HIS ELECTORAL TRIUMPH IN THE NOVEMBER 1983 ELECTIONS WAS SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MODERN TURKISH POLITICS, THE BUREAUCRACY AND THE INTELLIGENTSIA, TOGETHER WITH THE HIGHLY URBANIZED CENTERS OF MOST MAJOR CITIES, HAD VOTED FOR THE LEADING RIGHT-WING PARTY (HIS OWN MOTHERLAND PARTY) RATHER THAN FOR THE LEFT. THE NEXT FIVE YEARS WILL BE CRITICAL FOR THE FUTURE OF TURKISH DEMOCRACY. PRESIDENT EVREN IS COMMITTED TO A FULL RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF DEMOCRATIC LIFE AND PRACTICES, WHEREAS THE RADICAL LEFT SEEKS TO RETURN TURKEY TO MILITARY RULE, BELIEVING THAT THE INEVITABLE SEQUEL WOULD BE A TURN TO THE LEFT IN TURKISH NATIONAL LIFE. PRESENTLY, TURKEY PLAYS A KEY GEOPOLITICAL ROLE VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIET UNION, BLOCKING ITS ACCESS TO BOTH THE MEDITERRANEAN AND TO THE OIL FIELDS OF THE GULF. THUS, COMMUNISM SEEKS TO DESTABILIZE TURKEY MORE THAN ANY OTHER NATO COUNTRY. IN ADDITION, TURKEY POSES A FUTURE THREAT TO THE SOVIETS, BECAUSE THEIRS IS A "COLLECTION OF DIFFERENT RACES, NOT A NATION" LIKE THE U.S., AND THUS IS THREATENED BY THE GROWTH IN THE SIZE OF ITS LARGE MUSLIM AND TURKIC MINORITY IN CENTRAL ASIA. OZAL CLAIMED THAT RUSSIA ENTERED AFGHANISTAN MAINLY TO SHOW THE CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES OF THE USSR THAT IT WILL CRUSH ANY DISPLAY OF INDEPENDENCE BY ITS MUSLIM MINORITY. THUS, A STRONG TURKEY, BASED UPON ITS ANATOLIAN HEARTLAND, WILL HAVE A PROFOUND EFFECT UPON SOVIET POLICY IN CENTRAL ASIA IN THE FUTURE.

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6. COMMENTING FURTHER ON TURKISH DOMESTIC POLITICS, OZAL ASSERTED THAT HIS WAS THE ONLY "FREE PARTY" IN THE NOVEMBER 6 ELECTIONS. HE AND PRESIDENT EVREN ARE NOW TRYING TO IMPLEMENT A NEW POLITICAL SYSTEM, WHICH WILL TRY TO AVOID THE CONTINUAL STRUGGLES WHICH CHARACTERIZED PRE-1980 TURKEY. OZAL NOTED THAT HIS OWN MOTHERLAND PARTY (MP) IS AN ENTIRELY NEW NATIONWIDE ORGANIZATION, WHEREAS BOTH SODEP AND THE CORRECT WAY PARTY ARE CONTINUATIONS OF PREVIOUS POLITICAL GROUPS. HE EXPLAINED HIS THINKING ON THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS BY NOTING THAT PRE-EXISTING LAWS WOULD HAVE BARRED SEVERAL PARTIES FROM PARTICIPATING IN THE VOTING. BUT OZAL HIMSELF DECIDED THAT "WE WILL FACE THEM IN FIVE YEARS' TIME OR WE CAN FACE THEM NOW, SO BETTER TO FACE THEM NOW." HE EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE MP WILL WIN A MAJORITY, BY UNITING THE VOTES OF THE RIGHT IN THE MARCH 25 BALLOTING. ON THE LEFT, HE OPINED THAT THE POPULIST PARTY MIGHT LOSE

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SOME VOTES TO SODEP. BUT, IN ANY EVENT, HE CONCLUDED, TURKS WILL NOT RETURN TO THE OLD POLITICAL SYSTEM, AND WILL CONTINUE TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR PREFERENCE FOR NEW PARTIES AND NEW PEOPLE IN NATIONAL POLITICAL LIFE.

7. CYPRUS: OZAL OUTLINED TURKISH VIEWS ON THE ORIGINS OF THE ISSUE, EMPHASIZING THAT FOR GEOSTRATEGIC REASONS THE PHYSICAL PROXIMITY OF CYPRUS TO TURKEY--AND ITS DISTANCE FROM GREECE--MAKE IT A MAJOR POINT OF STRATEGIC AND MILITARY IMPORTANCE TO TURKEY. EXPRESSING FEARS OVER THE GROWTH OF LEFTIST INFLUENCE IN THE GREEK PART OF THE ISLAND, HE STATED THAT THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT THREAT THAT IT MAY BE "LOST TO THE COMMUNISTS" AT SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE. ON THE NOVEMBER 15 DECLARATION OF UDI BY THE TURKISH CYPRIOTS, OZAL CONTENDED THAT THIS STEP WAS ONLY INTENDED AS A MEANS OF BRINGING THE GREEK CYPRIOTS TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. HE EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT RECENT TURKISH AND TURKISH CYPRIOT CONCESSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED BY THE GREEK CYPRIOTS, WHO WILL ONLY DEMAND MORE CONCESSIONS. OZAL REITERATED HIS PROPOSAL FOR DEFUSING GREEK-TURKISH TENSIONS, INVOLVING A "FREEZE" ON CONTENTIOUS ISSUES, WHILE ADDRESSING THE SUBJECTS OF TRADE, TOURISM, AND INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION. BUT, HE NOTED THAT GREEK PM PAPANDEOU HAD RESPONDED BY PUTTING CONDITIONS ON ANY RENEWED DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS.

8. SYRIA: IN A SERIES OF COMMENTS ON SYRIA, OZAL DESCRIBED PRESIDENT ASSAD AS A "CLEVER MAN" AND ASSERTED THAT SYRIA IS "NOT A REAL, BUT AN ARTIFICIAL" STATE. IT HAD BEEN ONE OF THE PARTS OF THE OTTOMAN REALM IN WHICH TURKS AND NATIVE PEOPLES WERE MOST CLOSELY INTERMIXED. HE BELIEVED THAT SINCE THE ARMY AND BAATHIST TAKEOVER IN THE 1950S, AN INITIALLY PROSPEROUS COMMERCIALY ORIENTED ECONOMY IN SYRIA HAD GONE DOWNHILL; UNTIL THAT TIME, HE ADDED, THE SYRIAN ECONOMY HAD BEEN MORE HIGHLY DEVELOPED THAN THAT OF TURKEY, BUT NOW THEIR RESPECTIVE SITUATIONS WERE REVERSED, WITH SYRIA CURRENTLY FAR BEHIND TURKEY. OZAL CONTENDED THAT SYRIA IS FINANCIALLY DEPENDENT UPON SUPPORT FROM THE GULF COUNTRIES, AND FROM THE USSR FOR MILITARY EQUIPMENT. DECRYING PAST TURKISH POLICY OF "TURNING ITS BACK ON THE ARAB WORLD," OZAL SAID THAT EVEN WITH SYRIA, INCREASED TRADE AND ECONOMIC TIES WERE THE ROAD TO INCREASED TURKISH POLITICAL INFLUENCE. THE FORMER POLICY OF PUTTING MINES ON THE BORDER TO DISCOURAGE ILLEGAL ENTRIES FROM SYRIA WAS A MISTAKE, HE ADDED. SYRIA IS A POOR COUNTRY, HE SAID, WHICH TURKEY NEEDS TO CONTROL WITH ECONOMIC POWER, WITH THE HELP OF OTHER COUNTRIES SUCH AS THE U.S.

9. CONGRESSMAN LANTOS INTERVENED TO GIVE HIS READING OF THE SITUATION, WHICH DID NOT AGREE WITH THE PRIME MINISTER'S. LANTOS FELT THAT SYRIA HAD OBTAINED ENORMOUS ECONOMIC AID FROM THE USSR, WHICH REGARDS IT AS A CRITICAL BASE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. ADDING THAT "I DON'T EXPECT TO BE AROUND ON THIS PLANET BEFORE TURKEY HAS SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC INFLUENCE ON SYRIA," THE CONGRESSMAN WENT ON TO ASSERT THAT IT IS UNREALISTIC TO EXPECT TO GAIN CONTROL OVER SYRIA'S EXPORTING OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM TO TURKEY BY PURELY ECONOMIC MEANS. RATHER, TURKEY SHOULD CONSIDER PUTTING OTHER FORMS OF PRESSURE ON SYRIA, SINCE CURRENT TURKISH-SYRIAN PROBLEMS DEMAND MORE URGENT MEASURES THAN A LONG-TERM COMMERCIAL SOLUTION. OZAL RESPONDED: "SYRIA IS A MESS. IF IT DOESN'T GET ANY SUPPORT, IT WILL COLLAPSE." HE URGED THE CODEL NOT TO UNDERESTIMATE THE IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC INFLUENCES. IN ADDITION, HE NOTED THAT PREVIOUS TURKISH REMONSTRANCES TO SYRIA HAD BEEN MET BY BLAND DENIALS OF ANY SYRIAN

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INVOLVEMENT WITH TERRORISM.

10. CONGRESSMAN PICKLE, AFTER PRAISING TURKEY'S ROLE IN NATO, URGED THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT "HELP THE U.S. CONGRESS" BY BEING FLEXIBLE ON CYPRUS, AS WELL AS ON HUMAN RIGHTS, WHICH HE SAID "A LOT OF PEOPLE THINK ARE BEING ABUSED" IN TURKEY. OZAL RESPONDED THAT TURKEY HAD CONTINUED TO MAINTAIN RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL IN THE FACE OF PRESSURE FROM THE ISLAMIC NATIONS, EVEN WHEN GREECE DID NOT, WHILE ON LEBANON IT HAD GIVEN PERMISSION FOR THE INCIRLIK AGREEMENT TO RESUPPLY U.S. ELEMENTS OF THE MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE. ALL OF THIS WAS PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE. THUS, IT WAS MORE APPROPRIATE FOR TURKEY TO ASK THE U.S. FOR HELP, RATHER THAN THE REVERSE. TURKEY, HE WENT ON, HAD FOUGHT THE RUSSIANS FOR CENTURIES, WHILE THE GREEKS HAD NOT. TURKEY WAS IN NATO TO STRUGGLE ACTIVELY AGAINST THE WARSAW PACT, WHEREAS OTHERS WERE IN IT PURELY FOR DEFENSIVE REASONS. TURKEY PROVIDES THE ALLIANCE WITH MUCH MORE SUPPORT THAN IT RECEIVES IN RETURN. WITH AN INCOME OF \$1000 PER CAPITA, TURKEY PROVIDED NATO WITH ITS LARGEST ARMY AFTER THAT OF THE U.S., BUT DID SO WITH OUTDATED EQUIPMENT. ITS AIR FORCE WAS NO MATCH EVEN FOR THAT OF SYRIA. HOW THEN COULD TURKEY SEEK TO INFLUENCE SYRIA BY OTHER THAN ECONOMIC MEANS?

11. RESPONDING TO A QUESTION ON THE RESPECTIVE POLITICAL ROLES OF PRESIDENT EVREN AND OF HIMSELF, OZAL COMMENTED THAT THERE ARE MAJOR DIFFERENCES IN THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SYSTEMS OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES. THE U.S. WAS SETTLED BY FARMERS AND TRADERS, WHEREAS IN THE OTTOMAN SYSTEM, ARMY AND NATION WERE IDENTIFIED WITH ONE ANOTHER. THE TURKISH REPUBLIC WAS FOUNDED BY A FORMER GENERAL: ATATURK. THUS, IT WAS NATURAL FOR THE MILITARY TO PLAY A LARGE ROLE IN TURKEY, A BASIC DIFFERENCE FROM THE UNITED STATES. HE NOTED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT IN TURKEY THE CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF IS MUCH MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE. REGARDING PRESIDENT EVREN, OZAL STATED THAT HE HAS KNOWN THE PRESIDENT FOR THREE YEARS. ORIGINALLY, FOLLOWING SEPTEMBER 12, 1980, EVREN HAD MUCH MORE POWER THAN HE HOLDS AT PRESENT. EVEN NOW, HE HAS MORE POWER THAN DID PRESIDENTS UNDER EARLIER CONSTITUTIONS. OZAL POINTED OUT THAT THE PRESIDENT CAN APPOINT MOST JUDGES, AND MAY PRESIDE OVER THE CABINET, THOUGH HE HAS NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ULTIMATE OUTCOME OF DECISIONS. IN ADDITION, THE PRESIDENT CAN REJECT LAWS BY SENDING THEM BACK TO PARLIAMENT FOR RECONSIDERATION. THE "DILEMMA OF THE RULING PARTY" IS, THEREFORE, THAT IT IS DEALING WITH A PRESIDENT WHO FOR THREE YEARS HAD MUCH MORE POWER THAN HE HAS NOW. IT IS "HARD TO GET DOWN," EVEN IF ONE IS A GOOD MAN, OZAL SAID. EVREN IS THE ONLY MAN WHO COULD MANAGE THIS, HE WENT ON, AND EVEN FOR HIM IT IS DIFFICULT. BUT, OZAL ADDED THAT, ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO MEN ARE GOOD.

12. ANSWERING A QUESTION FROM CONGRESSMAN LOWERY ON TURKEY'S POLICY TOWARD THE MIDDLE EAST, OZAL STATED THAT MIDDLE EASTERN POLITICAL ISSUES ARE VERY COMPLEX, SO MUCH SO THAT AT TIMES HE FEELS THAT TURKEY "SHOULDN'T TOUCH THESE QUESTIONS." THE FIRST PRIORITY OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY IN THE REGION IS TO STOP THE IRAN-IRAQ WAR. OTHER ISSUES, SUCH AS THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE, CANNOT BE EASILY SOLVED. BUT THE WAR IS CRITICAL, SINCE TURKEY FEARS THAT EITHER IRAN WILL END UP JOINING FORCES WITH THE RUSSIANS, OR THE WAR WILL BE GREATLY EXPANDED, WITH A RESULTING IMPACT UPON ALL WHO LIVE IN THE REGION. STRASUZ-HUPE

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